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Editors: *Eugene Rose*, M.A., & *Gleb Podmoshensky*, B.Th.

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COVER: Ruins of the Dormition Cathedral of the Kiev-Caves Lavra; courtesy of S. M. Starov. Pp. 42, 43, 44: Line-engravings from the *Pechersky Patericon* printed in the Lavra in 1661. P. 61: Icon from St. Kyrill Monastery, Novgorod region, 1542. P 69: Courtesy of Archbishop John of Chicago. P. 70: below left, courtesy of Vadim Wright; below right, from E. Poselyanin, *The Mother of God*, St. Petersburg, n.d.

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CHRIST HAS CONQUERED THE WORLD!

....And having ascended into heaven in the sight of His disciples, He sent the Holy Spirit, by Whom Christians were given strength to live in Grace, in the transfigured world.

—— Upon the Apostles, mortal men, His glory was reflected: they openly drove out demons, healed, raised the dead, and burned to preach the Gospel so that all Christians might be even as they.

—— The martyrs, witnesses of Divine glory, by their temporal sufferings at the hands of enraged Satan, served as the seed of Christianity, this two-thousand-year-old kingdom of glory on earth.

—— And genuine monasticism, whose features were indicated beforehand by Christ Himself, became the guardian of this kingdom, as well as a fount of inspiration for the life of Grace in Christ.

THE KIEV-CAVES LAVRA

OF STS. ANTHONY AND THEODOSIUS

Monasticism is the foundation and standard of the Orthodox spiritual life, and never was an understanding of it more necessary than today, when so many influences strive to obliterate this spiritual life. The following very general view of the first great Russian monastery will serve as an introduction to a continuing series dealing with the great centers, representatives, and practices of Orthodox monasticism.

ACCORDING TO THE fourth canon of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, *Those who practice monasticism in every city and land must observe silence, attend only to the practice of fasting and prayer, remain without absenting themselves in those places where they have renounced the world; they shall intervene neither in Church nor in secular matters and shall take no part in them, unless entrusted by the bishop of the city, and then only out of necessity.*

Orthodox Christian civilization was at its peak when Russia, then the vigorous pagan Kiev-Russ, chose to accept Christianity from Byzantium. Monasticism was then in a flourishing state in Byzantium, the glorious example of the Egyptian and Palestinian deserts having spread far and wide. The Lavra of St. Athanasius on Mount Athos, the Rule of St. Theodore the Studite, were models of monastic life. Monasticism was brought in its purest form by St. Anthony and planted in the new soil of Russia; and soon, from the catacomb-caves of Kiev, rose an abundant harvest of saints. Today, after a thousand years, although undergoing the merciless test of persecution, the Kiev Caves have yet to say their final word to the world before the appearance of Antichrist and the Second Coming of Christ our Lord.

The Svensk-Pechersk Miracle-working Icon of the Theotokos **with** St. Anthony (right) and St. Theodosius (left), painted by St. Alypy.

19th-Century Engraving of the Lavra: Dormition Cathedral, rebuilt in 1698 by Hetman J. Mazepa and destroyed by Communists in 1941.

The Saints of the Great Kiev-Caves Lavra

Icon painted on the lid of a reliquary of the Kiev Saints in Holy Trinity Monastery at Jordanville, N.Y., the work of Archimandrite Cyprian P.

As the new Faith spread its roots in daily life, a young man, the future St. Anthony (✝1073), left his country in quest of true spiritual life. After wandering through Orthodox principalities in the south, he finally settled on Mt. Athos and became an ascetic of the strictest sort. His abbot, however, seeing his spiritual progress, blessed him to a new obedience: to go back to Russia and bring there the spirit of Mt. Athos.

In Kiev, no monastery satisfied him; complacency and a trace of worldly comfort were apparent in all; the spirit of podvig, which is what his soul desired, was absent. And so, finding a cave in a desolate forest, he dug a little farther and made this his dwelling. Here he entered into the spirit of the early Christian catacombs, which had inspired the daily cycle of Church services, the sacred art of iconography, and above all the witnessing of Christ in martyrdom, and then, with the end of the persecutions, had moved into the Desert; the fragrance of this spirit drew to the humble caves of Anthony a host of local followers...

Thus the brotherhood, the army of "angels on earth," grew. The first abbot of the monastery was *St. Varlaam*, who was of noble birth; but St. Anthony remained the Starets. *St. Theodosius*, himself St. Anthony's most obedient disciple, was a model abbot-saint, and it was through his guidance that the brotherhood began to produce a veritable regiment of spiritual giants, models for posterity in every phase of monastic activity. The Orthodox spirituality, complete with the institution of guidance by Startsi, which they lived to the fullest degree, was later gloriously revived by St. Sergius of Radonezh (1314-1392) and St. Nil Sorsky (✝1508), who defended it, and finally by the Blessed Paissy Velichkovsky (1722-1794) and his followers, ending with Optina, Valaam, and a very few other Russian monasteries.[1]

St. Theodosius (✝1074), whose life has come down to us by the hand of the monastery's holy chronicler, St. Nestor, was of noble birth and very early showed a leaning toward monasticism, to the great displeasure of his mother. After many attempts to escape to a monastery, he finally found refuge at St. Anthony's caves, where he gave himself to the severe labor of self-mortification. On becoming abbot he displayed great administrative skill as well as a heart burning with love for his brothers; and they, lit by this sacred flame, were inspired to undertake great ascetic labors.

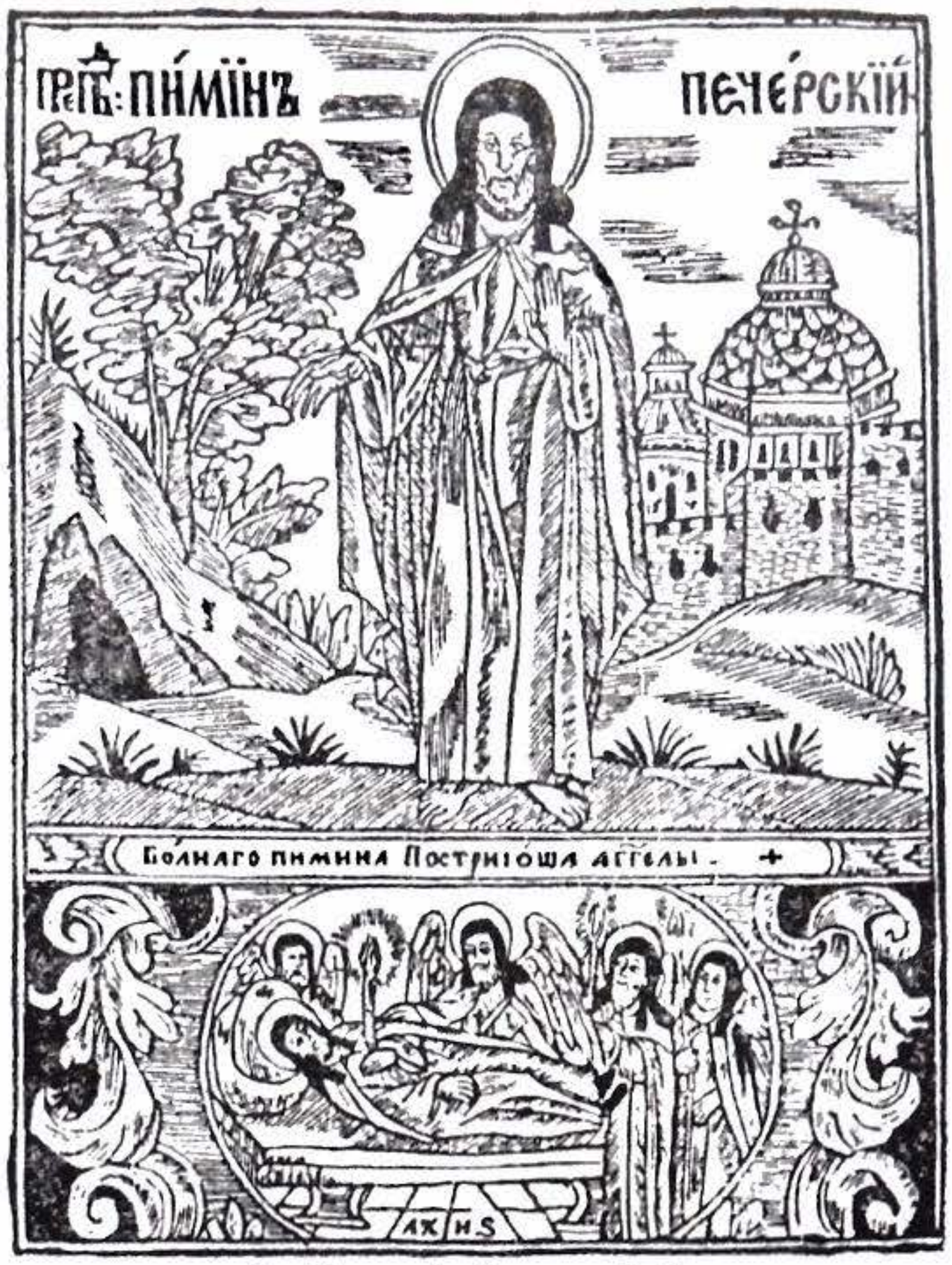
1. For an excellent treatment of Sts. Anthony and Theodosius and their spiritual tradition, see I M.Kontzevich, *The Acquisition of the Holy Spirit in Ancient Russia* (in Russian), pp. 87-93.

Sts. Spiridon and Nikodim

ONCE ST. THEODOSIUS adopted the rule of St. Theodore the Studite, the Caves became a Lavra, the largest type of monastery, and every monastic obedience became a fount of flowing Grace. *The Pechersky Patericon* (13th-century compilation of the Lives of the Kiev-Caves Saints) gives some examples:

St. Longin the gatekeeper was so pure in heart that he was blessed with the gift of reading the thoughts of those who entered and left by his gate. The holy bakers of *prosphora* or altar-bread, *Sts. Spiridon and Nikodim*, knew by heart and constantly sang the Psalms of David, thus sanctifying the bread that was to be used for the Holy Gifts, and they had power to command the flame of the stove. *St. Prokhor* baked a sweet bread out of grass to feed the hungry during famine. The prayer and love of *St. Agapit*, unmercenary doctor, performed miraculous healings. *St. Mark* the gravedigger was obeyed by the dead. *St. Alypy*, an excellent iconographer, the founder of Russian sacred art, approached his obedience with such fear of God that once, when he was sick and unable to finish an icon, he beheld an angel completing his work for him.

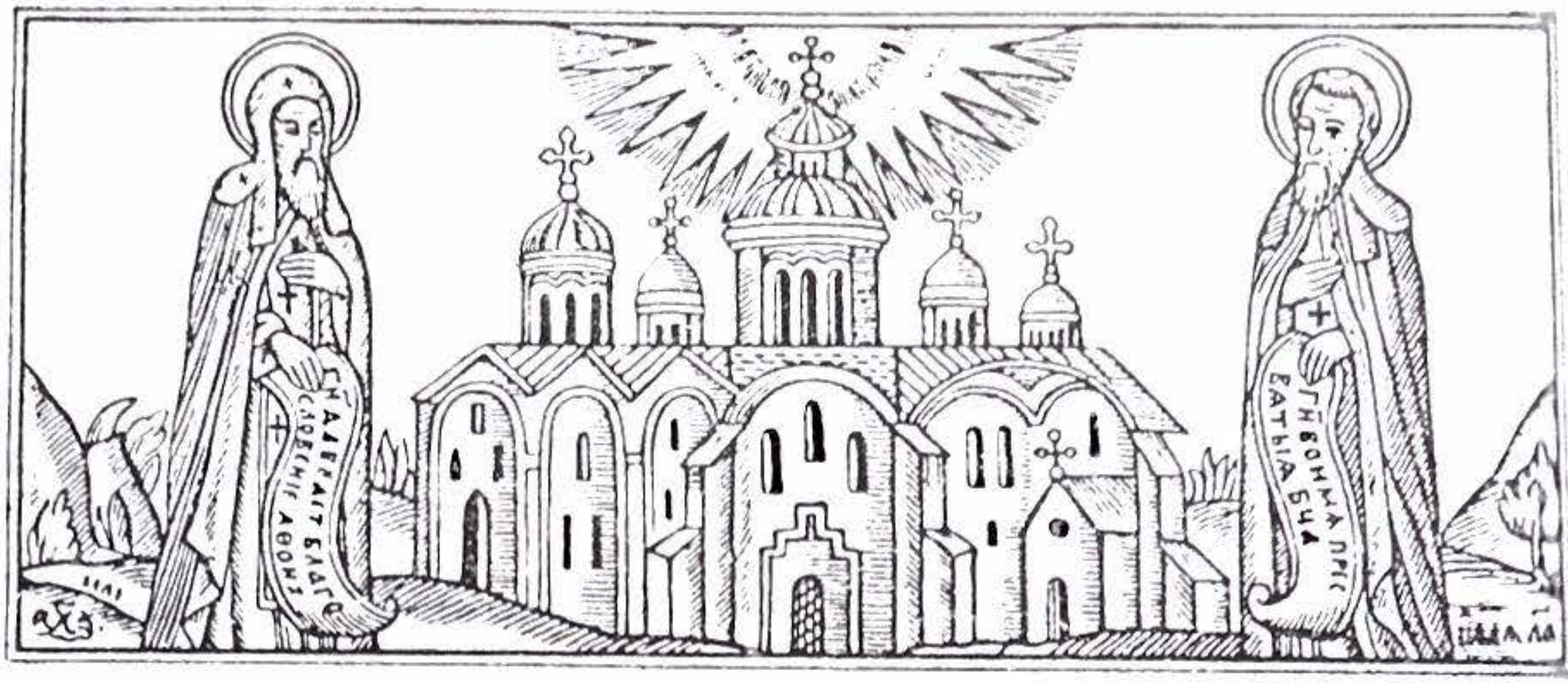
From its very beginning the Lavra has had an exceptional devotion to the perfect performance of all Church services; in this sphere it became the standard for all of Holy Russia.



St. Pimen the Long-suffering

IN THE ASCETIC and spiritual life the Caves Monastery inherited the great traditions of Near Eastern spirituality, and it in turn reached heights rivalling the Syrian Stylites and the great hermits of the Desert. Its rich spiritual experience, passed down through the ages, shaped the spiritual formation of 1000 years of Holy Russia.

St. Pimen the Long-suffering practiced the virtues of suffering and patience for many years. Being paralyzed, he begged God to preserve him in this state, since otherwise his parents would not allow him to remain in the monastery. He wished to be tonsured a monk, but his pleas went unheard, until one night, when heavenly singing was heard in the cave where he lay, and the brothers discovered that he was tonsured by angels. *St. John the Long-suffering*, being posessed by lust, buried himself to the waist to fight the demon of sexual passion. To him it is customary to pray for freedom from this passion. Young *St. Nikita*, the future holy Bishop of Novgorod, despite his Elders' warnings, relied on his own judgement and became a recluse, giving himself up to prayer beyond his measure, and soon began to instruct and prophesy, citing, however, only the Old Testament, which revealed him to be in satanic prelest or delusion. The holy startsi barely managed to save him, and he rose thereafter



to genuine spiritual heights. A similar incident befell *St. Isaac the Recluse*, who, when Satan appeared to him in the guise of the Saviour, bowed down and worshipped him. For over two years he was motionless as a corpse, but he regained his senses after being nursed by Sts. Anthony and Theodosius, and became a fool for Christ's sake, the prototype of a long line of Russian representatives of this phase of sanctity.

In 1240 Kiev was conquered by the Tartars, the citizens massacred, and everything burned. Some monks from the Caves boldly became martyrs, others fought or fled. A number of them settled on the mountain of Pochaev, thus laying the foundation for another great Lavra.[1] For many centuries, although monks began to live there again, the Caves Lavra did not regain its original greatness. But at the end of the 17th century a new period of spiritual flourishing began,[2] culminating in the first half of the 19th century, which saw such spiritual giants as Metropolitan Philaret (Amphiteatrov), Bishop Anthony of Voronezh, the Recluse Dositheus, Starets Partheny, and a number of fools for Christ's sake, headed by Fr. Theophil.[3] The great Starets Alexy, of the Goloseyevsky skete attached to the Lavra, died as late as 1917.

After the Revolution of 1917 the Communist plan to exterminate Orthodoxy began with Kiev. The first of Russia's New Martyrs was Vladimir, Metropolitan of Kiev, who was brutally murdered in the Lavra in 1918; and millions of other martyrs followed. Before surrendering the Lavra to the invading German army in 1941, the Soviets concealed time-bombs throughout the grounds of the Lavra, which then exploded one by one. It was possible to save the belfry, but the heart of the Lavra, the Dormition Cathedral (see cover), was destroyed.

1. See *The Orthodox Word* vol. 1, no. 3, p. 79.
2. *Ibid.* vol 2, no. 5, p *159*
3. *Ibid.* vol *1*, no. *4*, pp. *144*, *153*.

ST. MARK OF EPHESUS
AND THE FALSE UNION OF FLORENCE

By ARCHIMANDRITE AMVROSSY POGODIN
M.Sc Eccl., D.D.

IV THE OPENING OF THE COUNCIL

AFTER A DIFFICULT VOYAGE of three months on the stormy Mediterranean Sea, the Greek delegation, in the ships and on the money of Pope Eugenius IV, arrived in Venice. Being met there by the nobility and people of Venice, who had always been well-disposed to the Greeks, and likewise by the Papal representative Tarquinius, the Greek delegation directed its steps to Ferrara. The Greeks were received solemnly and cordially by the Pope, who took pains that they be comfortably lodged. After a series of elegant speeches and banquets, there followed a period of complete inactivity.

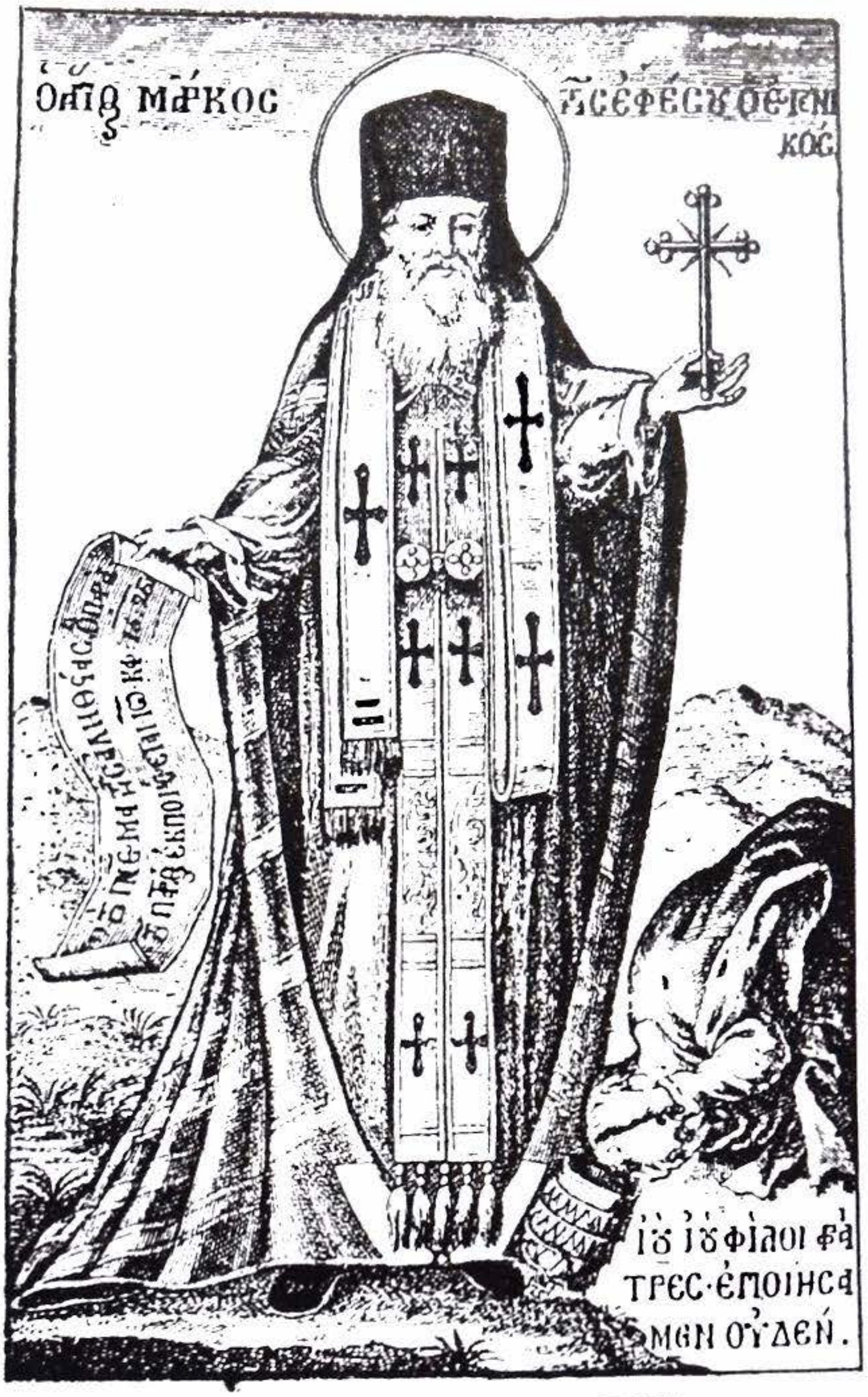
The opening of the Council, or rather, the beginning of negotiations between the Greeks and Latins over the question of the Union of the Churches, was held in the cathedral church of Ferrara on the ninth of April, 1438. It was accompanied by solemn Divine services and the reading of a Papal Bull and an Encyclical of the Patriarch. After the opening of the Council, however, there began a long period of inactivity. Emperor John Paleologos was waiting for the Western Princes to assemble, for in reality it was in order to meet them and to negotiate a military alliance against the Turks that he had devised this whole affair. But the political situation in the West was such that these Princes either were no longer living or could not come.

Meanwhile, the Pope insisted that negotiations proceed on the question of the Union. Finally there was organized a mixed committee of Latin and Greek theologians for explication of the points of divergence

between the Eastern and Western Churches. On the Latin side were: Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini, a skillful diplomat; Cardinal Nicholas Albergati; Archbishop Andrew of Rhodes, a Greek who had gone over to the Latins, an erudite but not a profound theologian; the celebrated and profound Spanish theologian John Torquemada; later there was joined to these the experienced theologian Fra John of Ragusa. On the Greek side were: St. Mark of Ephesus, as exarch and head of debate; and Bessarion, Metropolitan of Nicaea, who at first supported St. Mark, but then became his opponent and acted for the harm of the Orthodox Church, ending his life as one of the leading cardinals of the Roman Church. There were other members, too, of the Greek delegation who participated in the committee, but they were not permitted to enter into the debates.

The actual heads of the committee were, for the Latins, the Pope, and for the Greeks, the Emperor. The Pope pursued his aim: to subject the Orthodox Church to himself; and the Emperor pursued *his* aim: to conclude an agreement profitable for the State. There were few who gave thought to the spiritual side of the question, which was of course more important than anything else in this world, since the matter was one of the possibility of the reunion of Churches.

For this reason especially remarkable was the address which St. Mark made to the Pope at the opening of the Council. This address proves that there is absolutely no foundation for the assertion that St. Mark was opposed in principle to the Union and set as his aim to sabotage the negotiations before they had even begun. On the contrary, St. Mark ardently desired union with the Latins, believed in its possibility, and sought it -- but a genuine union, founded on unity of faith and of ancient Liturgical practice. But this address is important also because in it St. Mark considered it necessary to inform the Pope immediately that the Orthodox hierarchs had come to Italy not to sign a capitulation, and not to sell Orthodoxy for the benefit of their State; they had come rather as to an Ecumenical Council, for the confirmation of true doctrine. In addition, St. Mark made it clear that the purity of Orthodoxy must be preserved, and that the negotiations could end in failure if Rome did not agree to the well-known concessions, renouncing those innovations, unknown to the ancient Church, which had been introduced into the dogmatics and Liturgical practice of the Western Church and were the reason for the schism between the two Churches. Further, St. Mark indicated that the union of all Christians against the common enemy -- the Turks -- would be just as necessary for the West as it was for Byzantium.



SAINT MARK OF EPHESUS

1391-1444

The earliest extant icon of the Saint, who is shown triumphing over the fallen Pope of Rome: "Mark has not signed, therefore we have accomplished nothing."

Troparion, Tone 3 (Greek)

O all-laudable and most divine Mark,
In thee the Church found a great zealot
By thy confession of the Holy and Sacred Faith.
For thou didst champion the doctrines which the Fathers taught,
And didst cast down darkness' boastful pride.
Wherefore pray thou to Christ God for those who honor thee,
That He may grant us forgiveness of sins.

The address begins as if with faith in the success of the negotiations; then a prayer to the Saviour follows for the successful conclusion of the Council's work; but gradually it is revealed to the spiritual eye of the Saint that his hopes would not be justified, that the evil habit of schism would triumph; and his address concludes, or rather breaks off, in a tone of despair.

St. Mark's address evoked extreme indignation among the Greeks, who did not wish the divergence between the Eastern and Western Churches to be spoken of at all. Probably the address was received with cold disdain by the Pope as well. St. Mark spoke the Truth and fought for the Truth, and it was precisely this that no one wished to admit, because for the good of the Church as such, whether Western or Eastern, no one gave any thought, and each side sought political advantage for itself.

V THE DEBATES OF THE COUNCIL

The commission of theologians of the Eastern and Western Churches did not have the possibility to work actively, since the Emperor John Paleologos did not permit his representatives to aggravate the questions of dogmatic divergences between the Churches, but wished to conclude the Union on the basis of certain vague general propositions. Therefore the Pope took the initiative into his own hands and authorized Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini to inform the Greeks that, in the opinion of the Latin Church, the divergences between the Churches were the following: 1 The teaching on the Procession of the Holy Spirit; 2 the question of unleavened bread for the Eucharist; 3 the doctrine of purgatory; 4 the primacy of the Pope of Rome. The Emperor forbade his representatives to touch the question of the divergence in the dogma of the Procession of the Holy Spirit. After a careful consideration of the situation, the Greeks decided that it would be best to approach the question of purgatory. They supposed that on this question they would easily find a "bridge" between the two Churches.

In the Orthodox Church, one may say, there exists no definite dogma on life after death. There is a general teaching of the Church, on the foundation of various expressions of the Holy Fathers, the texts of Church hymns, and visions from the Lives of Saints, but there is no definite dogma; therefore the Orthodox thought that with the Catholics too the teaching on Purgatory would not be "juridical," that is to say, a dogma, an official teaching of the Catholic Church. Too, they had not heard in what precisely the teaching on Purgatory consisted.

It was an unwise move: in the opinion of Catholic theologians themselves the dogma of purgatory was formulated only at this very same Council of Florence, and subsequently it produced great complications in the Western world itself.

However, the Orthodox supposed that they would find a means of drawing near to the Latins in just this question of the state of souls after death. If this teaching in the Roman Church were sound and could be accepted, then the Orthodox would be ready to accept it; but if it accorded neither with Holy Scripture, nor with the teaching of the Holy Fathers, then the Orthodox would help the Latins and indicate the lack of foundation for their idea of purgatory, and by their common labors they would come to the truth.

In the beginning of negotiations on the question of purgatory it appeared that the divergences between the Churches were so insignificant that a common mind would be easily found. But as the question deepened it became clear that no "bridge" could be found, and that the teaching on purgatory was completely unacceptable for the Orthodox.

Although in those fragments of the Acts of the Council of Florence that have been preserved, very little is said of the negotiations on the question of purgatory, still there have been preserved, and published by Mgr. L. Petit in volume 15 of the *Patrologia Orientalis*, documents relating to this period. All of these documents were translated by us into Russian and printed in our book: 1 Statement of the Latins on Purgatory. 2 First Treatise of St. Mark of Ephesus on Purgatorial Fire. 3 Reply of the Greeks to the Statement of the Latins. 4 Reply of the Latins to the Statement of the Greeks. 5 Second Treatise of St. Mark on Purgatorial Fire. 6 Replies of St. Mark to the Subsequent Questions of the Latins. 7 Ten Arguments of St. Mark Against the Existence of Purgatorial Fire.

The mentioned works of St Mark on purgatorial fire are superb and constitute the most complete treatment of this question in Orthodox literature. Western criticism has designated them as *opus elegans, nec contemnendum*: "an excellent work, not to be neglected."

After this first attempt to find a "bridge" between the Churches had failed, several months passed in inactivity, which weighed heavily on the Greeks. Finally the question of the *Filioque* was approached -- the most painful question in the relations between the Orthodox and Latin Churches. The Orthodox considered that the Latins had acted uncanonically in inserting into the Symbol of Faith (the Creed), a holy object common to all of Christianity, some kind of dogmatic addition.

The process of inserting this addition had been gradual, and in its origin had even had a positive, if mistaken, aim: in her battle with Arianism, which had kept up very long in the West, the Roman Church in Spain had begun to introduce it in order to show the Consubstantiality of God the Father and God the Son, as well as the fact that the Holy Spirit has an equal dependence upon Both Hypostases, and that All Three Persons of the Holy Trinity are Consubstantial and equally worthy of honor.

The Popes, however, had not sanctioned this uncanonical addition, and had sometimes even openly opposed it. But gradually the *Filioque* became a permanent part of the Creed in the West. In the polemics between Patriarch Photios and Pope Nicholas, among other questions, there was also the question of the *Filioque*. At the time of the Great Schism in 1054 the *Filioque* was not mentioned. Succeeding Popes sanctioned the *Filioque* and Latin theologians reinforced it with the heretical teaching that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Hypostases of God the Father and God the Son, *i.e.*, has His Existence from Both Hypostases; and this made the situation for the union of the Churches very difficult.

It is well known to what extent the Orthodox Church has regarded and regards with caution questions of dogma. The slightest deviation from dogmas formulated at the period of the Ecumenical Councils threatens a fall into heresy. Therefore the Third and Fourth Ecumenical Councils enacted a most strict decree, that in the Symbol of Faith there could not be changed, added, or subtracted even a single word, even a single syllable; and upon those who would dare to do this they laid terrible condemnations. The correctness of the Holy Fathers of these Ecumenical Councils may be seen in the fact that the chief reason for the failure of the union of Churches at the Council of Florence was precisely the *Filioque*. St. Mark appealed with great entreaty both to Pope Eugenius and to the Cardinals, begging them to agree to remove the *Filioque*. But the Church of Rome did not do this.

I will not weary the reader with the endless debates on this question. The question was deliberated at first in Ferrara, absolutely without result, and then in Florence. The Greeks indicated, citing decrees of Ecumenical Councils, that the introduction of the *Filioque* in itself was uncanonical, bnt the Latins affirmed that this addition expressed a sound dogmatic idea. Syropoulos informs us that once there came to the debates between the Greeks and the Latins a group of Catholic monk-hermits, who after listening to the debates declared, in the hearing of all, that the Greeks were right and that without question they had preserved the

correct faith. At this the Catholic authorities ejected them, reviled them as "ignoramuses," and confined them in a monastery, forbidding them to speak. And so these monk ascetics sensed the truth!

Inasmuch as the Latins asked that the question of the *Filioque* be examined from the dogmatic point of view, *i.e.*, that the dogma of the Procession of the Holy Spirit be examined, the Greeks, despite the unwillingness of St. Mark and many of the other Greek hierarchs, went on to this question. It was at about this time, because of the plague raging in Ferrara, that the Council was transferred to Florence.

In Florence the situation changed sharply. Here, in St. Mark's expression, "the Latins threw off their masks." Severe pressure was brought to bear on the Orthodox delegation; it was demanded that they capitulate to the Catholic Church, that they accept all her doctrines and complete administrative submission to the Vatican, in effect the self-liquidation of Orthodoxy. The Greeks found themselves in an exceptionally difficult situation; they did not receive sufficient money for subsistence and literally suffered from hunger. Both St. Mark and Syropoulos write of the fact that the Greeks were exhausted from hunger; both explain this as Vatican politics, a means of forcing the Greeks to surrender. On the other hand, the Vatican's own financial difficulties at that time may also have been partly to blame.

As for returning to Greece, the Greeks had no means to do so, and the Pope alone could call ships and send them home. To the demand of Emperor John Paleologos that the Pope send the Greeks home, the Pope replied: "First we must conclude the Union, and then part."

But besides their personal suffering, the Greek delegation was burdened yet further with care for the State, for the people, who were on the verge of destruction, and whom they had to help by attracting the West to the aid of perishing Byzantium. Many in the Greek delegation thought that the salvation of Byzantium could be attained only through union with the Church of Rome, and that it was necessary to agree to everything, only to please Rome.

St. Mark of Ephesus, however, at first enjoying the support of several hierarchs, but then being left completely alone, viewed the situation in another light: the fate of the Orthodox Church was in grave danger. Otthodoxy is more precious than Byzantium itself: Orthodoxy is an eternal treasure, the Church of those being saved; while the State is of the earth, even though infinitely dear. When it becomes imperative to chose between Orthodoxy and the Byzantine State, then one must

preserve Orthodoxy. Byzantium, as a State, was born, flourished, and will die; but Orthodoxy is eternal and must be preserved as an eternal light not only for all succeeding ages of this world's existence, but also for eternity.

A division arose among the Greeks: Cardinals (then still Metropolitans of the Orthodox Church) Bessarion and Isidore, and Protosyncellus Gregory Mammas (later Uniate Patriarch of Constantinople) stepped out against St Mark. He was subjected to manifest insults. The Emperor dismissed St. Mark from all debates (which St Mark himself had already abandoned, seeing the impossibility of speaking with the loquacious Latin theologian-erudites, who would accept no arguments of any kind). The Emperor subjected St. Mark to house arrest, and Patriarch Joseph not only did not support St. Mark, but even demanded that he unite with the group that was prepared to sell Orthodoxy.

St. Mark in his battle was completely alone; he feared for his very life, as we may see from a source hostile to him, where he is quoted as saying: "I feared that the Latins would lay murderous hands upon me." From these painful sufferings St. Mark's very disease (he apparently suffered from cancer of the intestine) worsened. But this exhausted, fatally-ill man, who found himself persecuted and in disgrace, represented in his person the Orthodox Church; he was a spiritual giant, with whom (unless it be St. Maximus the Confessor) there is none to compare.

St. Mark is the author of a series of theological works devoted to the question of the *Filioque*, which we have printed in Russian translation in our book. In these works St. Mark shows the uncanonicity of the insertion of the *Filioque* into the Symbol of Faith; he brings forth numerous (more than a hundred) citations from the Holy Scriptures, from decrees of Ecumenical Councils, and from the Holy Fathers, from which it is evident that the Holy Spirit has His Existence only from God the Father, and is only "sent" by the Son at times and according to the need of the Church (as for instance on the day of Pentecost, upon the Holy Apostles); finally, in a comprehensive theological work, built also upon philosophical principles, St. Mark demonstrates that the Holy Spirit has His Existence only from God the Father, and shows the total unacceptability of the Latin teaching on the Procession of the Holy Spirit from the Hypostases of God the Father and God the Son. To this question St. Mark returned both in his "Confession" and his "Encyclical Letter."

The third and final installment of this article will appear in the next issue of The Orthodox Word.

ENCYCLICAL LETTER

OF SAINT MARK OF EPHESUS

The many writings of St. Mark occasioned by the false Union of Florence are an important source material for all who wish to understand the position of the Church of Christ as against the heresies of the Roman Church, as well as against the pseudo-Orthodoxy that proclaims that "nothing separates us" precisely where the Fathers have pronounced anathema.

The present Letter was written probably in July of 1440 as an answer to the promulgation in Constantinople of the false Union.[1]

TO ALL ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS ON THE MAINLAND AND IN THE ISLANDS: FROM MARK, BISHOP OF THE METROPOLY OF EPHESUS: REJOICE IN CHRIST!

THOSE WHO HAVE ENSNARED US in an evil captivity and desire to lead us away into the Babylon of Latin rites and dogmas could not, of course, completely accomplish this, seeing immediately that there was little chance of it, in fact that it was simply impossible; but having stopped somewhere in the middle, both they and those who followed after them, they neither remained any longer what they were, nor became anything else. For having quit Jerusalem, a firm and unwavering faith, but being in no condition and not wishing to become and to be called Babylonians, they thus called themselves, as if by right, "Greco-Latins," and among the people are called "Latinizers." And so these split people, like the mythical centaurs, confess together with the Latins that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son and has the Son as Cause of His existence, and yet together with us confess that He proceeds from the Father. And they say together with them that the addition to the Creed (of the *Filioque*) was done canonically and with blessing, and yet together with us do not permit it to be uttered. (Besides, who would turn away from what was canonical and blessed?!) And they say together with them that unleavened bread is the Body of

1. Translated from the Russian translation of Archimandrite Amvrossy Pogodin, in *St. Mark of Ephesus and the Union of Florence*, Jordanville, N.Y., 1963, pp. 331-8.

Christ, and yet together with us do not dare to accept it. Is this not sufficient to reveal their spirit, and how that it was not in quest of the Truth (which, having in their hands, they betrayed) that they came together with the Latins, but from a desire to enrich themselves and to conclude not a true, but a false Union.

II

But one should examine in what manner they have united with them; for everything that is united to something different is naturally united by means of some middle point between them. And thus they imagined to unite with them by means of some judgement concerning the Holy Spirit, together with them expressing the opinion that He has existence also from the Son; but everything else between them is divergent, and there is among them neither any middle point nor anything in common. Just as before two divergent Creeds are uttered; likewise there are celebrated two Liturgies, divergent and discordant one with the other: one with leavened bread, the other with unleavened bread; divergent also are baptisms: one performed with triple immersion, the other with pouring over the head from above, and one with anointing with chrism, the other completely without; and all rites are in everything divergent and discordant one with the other, and likewise the fasts and church usages and other like things. What kind of unity is this, when there is no apparent and clear sign of it? And in what manner have they united with them, desiring also to preserve their own (for in this they were unanimous) and at the same time not following the traditions of the Fathers?

III

But what is their own "wise" opinion? "Never," they say, "has the Greek Church said that the Holy Spirit proceeds only from the Father; she has said simply that He proceeds from the Father, thus not excluding the participation of the Son in the Procession of the Holy Spirit. Therefore (they say) both before and now we exhibit unity."

Alas, what absurdity! Alas, what blindness! If the Greek Church, having received it from Christ Himself and the Holy Apostles and Fathers, has said that the Spirit proceeds from the Father, but has never said (for she has received this from no one) that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son, then what else does this signify than that she affirms that the Holy Spirit proceeds only from the Father? For if He is not from the Son, evidently, He is only from the Father.

Do you know what is said concerning the Generation? "Begotten of the Father before all ages." Would anyone add here "only of the Father"? Yet it is precisely thus and in no other way that we understand it, and, if need be, will express it. For we have been taught that the Son is begotten of none else, but only of the Father. Therefore too John Damascene says, on behalf of the whole Church and all Christians: "We do not say that the Holy Spirit is from the Son."[a] And if we do not say that the Spirit is also from the Son, then it is apparent that we thus say that the Spirit is only from the Father; therefore a little before this he says: "We do not call the Son Cause,"[b] and in the next chapter: "The sole Cause is the Father."[c]

IV

What more? "Never," they say, have we considered Latins heretics, but only schismatics." But this too they have taken from them (the Latins), for the latter, having nothing with which to accuse us in our doctrine, call us schismatics because we have turned away from the obedience to them which, as they think, we should have. But let us examine the matter. Will it be just for us likewise to show them kindness and place no blame on them in matters of the Faith?

It was they who gave the grounds for the schism by openly making the addition (the *Filioque*), which until then they had spoken in secret; while we were the first to separate ourselves from them, or rather, to separate and cut them off from the common Body of the Church. Why, may I ask? Because they have the right Faith or have made the addition (to the Creed) in an Orthodox fashion? Surely whoever would begin to talk like that would not be right in the head. But rather because they have an absurd and impious opinion and for no reason at all made the addition. And so we have turned away from them as from heretics and have shunned them.

What more is necessary? The pious canons speak thus: "He is a heretic and subject to the canons against heretics who even slightly departs from the Orthodox Faith."[d] If, then, the Latins do not at all depart from the correct Faith, we have evidently cut them off unjustly: but if they have thoroughly departed (from the Faith) -- and that in connection with the theology of the Holy Spirit, blasphemy against Whom is the greatest of all perils -- then it is clear that they are heretics, and we have cut them off as heretics.

Why do we anoint with chrism those of them who come to us? Is it not clear that it is because they are heretics? For the seventh canon of the Second Ecumenical Council states: *As for those heretics who betake themselves to Orthodoxy, and to the lot of those being saved, we accept them in accordance with the subjoined sequence and custom: Arians, and Macedonians, and Sabbatians, and Novatians, those calling themselves Cathari ("Puritans") and Aristeri ("Best"), and the Quartodecimans, otherwise known as Tetradites, and Apollinarians we accept when they offer libelli (recantations in writing) and anathematize every heresy that does not hold the same beliefs as the Catholic and Apostolic Church of God, and are sealed first with holy chrism on their forehead and their eyes, and nose, and mouth, and ears; and in sealing them we say: 'The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit.'*

Do you see with whom we number those who come from the Latins? If all those (enumerated in the canon) are heretics, then it is clear that these (the Latins) are the same. And what does the most wise Patriarch of Antioch, Theodore Balsamon, say of this in reply to the Most Holy Patriarch of Alexandria, Mark? "Imprisoned Latins and others coming to our Catholic churches request communion of the Divine Sacraments. We desire to know: is this permissible?" (Answer:) "*He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad* (St. Matt. 12:30; St. Luke 11:23). Because many years ago the celebrated Roman Church was separated from communion with the other four Most Holy Patriarchs, having apostatized into customs and doctrines foreign to the Catholic Church and not Orthodox (it was for this reason that the Pope was not deemed worthy of sharing in the commemoration of the names of the Eastern Patriarchs at Divine Services), -- therefore we must not sanctify one of Latin race through the Divine and most pure Gifts (given) by priestly hands, unless he shall first resolve to depart from Latin dogmas and customs and shall be catechized and joined to those of Orthodoxy."[e]

Do you hear, how they have departed not only in customs, but also in dogmas foreign to those of Orthodoxy (and what is foreign to Orthodox dogma is, of course, heretical teaching), and that, according to the canons, they must be catechized and united to Orthodoxy? And if it is necessary to catechize, then clearly it is necessary to anoint with chrism. How have they suddenly presented themselves to us as Orthodox, they who for so long and according to the judgement of such great Fathers and Teachers have been considered heretics? Who has so easily "made" them Orthodox? --It is gold, if you desire to acknowledge the

truth, and your own thirst for gain; or, to express it better: it did not make them Orthodox, but made you like them and carried you into the camp of the heretics.

V

"But if," they say, "we had devised some middle ground (compromise) between dogmas, then thanks to this we would have united with them and accomplished our business superbly, without at all having been forced to say anything except what corresponds to custom and has been handed down (by the Fathers)." This is precisely the means by which many, from of old, have been deceived and persuaded to follow those who have led them off to the steep precipice of impiety; believing that there is some kind of middle ground between two teachings that can reconcile obvious contradictions, they have been exposed to peril....

If the Latin dogma is true that the Holy Spirit proceeds also from the Son, then ours is false that states that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father (and this is precisely the reason for which we separated from them); and if ours is true, then without doubt theirs is false. What kind of middle ground can there be between two such judgements? There can be none, unless it were some kind of judgement suitable to both the one and the other, like a boot that fits both feet. And will *this* unite us?....

VI

But, someone will say, how shall we regard those moderate Greco-Latins who, maintaining a middle ground, openly favor some of the Latin rites and dogmas, favor but do not wish to accept others, and entirely disapprove of still others? One must flee from them as one flees from a snake, as from the Latins themselves, or, it may be, from those who are even worse than they -- as from buyers and sellers of Christ. For they, as the Apostle says, *suppose that gain is godliness* (I Tim. 6:5), of whom he adds: *flee these* (I Tim. 6:11), for they go over to them (the Latins) not in order to learn, but for gain. *What communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?* (II Cor. 6: 14-15).

Behold how we, together with Damascene and all the Fathers, do not say that the Spirit proceeds from the Son;[f] while they, together with the Latins, say that the Spirit proceeds from the Son. And we, together with the divine Dionysios, say that the Father is the sole Source of the supernatural Divinity;[g] while they say together with the Latins that the Son also is the Source of the Holy Spirit, by this clearly excluding the Spirit from the Divinity. And we, together with Gregory the

Theologian, distinguish the Father from the Son in His capacity of being Cause;[h] while they together with the Latins unite Them into one in the capacity of being Cause. And we, together with St. Maximus and the Romans of that time and the Western Fathers, "do not make the Son the Cause of the Spirit";[i] while they, in their Conciliar Decree (Act of Union), proclaim the Son "in Greek, Cause, and in Latin, Principle" of the Spirit. And we, together with the Philosopher and Martyr Justin, affirm, "As the Son is from the Father, so is the Spirit from the Father";[j] while they say together with the Latins that the Son proceeds from the Father immediately, and the Spirit from the Father mediately. And we, together with Damascene and all the Fathers, confess that it is not known to us in what consists the difference between generation and procession;[k] while they, together with Thomas (Aquinas) and the Latins, say that the difference consists in this, that generation is immediate, and procession mediate. And we affirm, in agreement with the Fathers, that the Will and Energy of the Uncreated and Divine Nature are uncreated; while they, together with the Latins and Thomas, say that Will is identical with Nature, but that the Divine Energy is created, whether it be called Divinity, or the Divine and Immaterial Light, or the Holy Spirit, or something else of this nature, and in some fashion these poor creatures "worship" the created "Divinity" and the created "Divine Light" and the created "Holy Spirit." And we say that neither do the Saints receive the Kingdom and the unutterable blessings already prepared for them, nor are sinners already sent to hell, but both await their fate which will be received in the future age after the resurrection and Judgement; while they, together with the Latins, desire immediately after death to receive according to their merits, and for those in an intermediate condition, who have died in repentance, they give a purgatorial fire (which is not identical with that of hell) so that, as they say, having purified their souls by it after death, they also together with the righteous will enjoy the Kingdom (of Heaven); this is contained in their Conciliar Decree (Act of Union). And we, obeying the Apostles, who have prohibited it, shun Jewish unleavened bread; while they, in the same Act of Union, proclaim that what is used in the services of the Latins is the Body of Christ. And we say that the addition to the Creed arose uncanonically and anticanonically and contrary to the Fathers; while they affirm that it is canonical and blessed -- to such an extent are they unaware how to conform to the Truth and to themselves! And for us the Pope is as one of the Patriarchs, and that only if he be Orthodox; while they with great gravity proclaim him Vicar of Christ, Father and Teacher of all

Christians. May they be more fortunate than their Father, who are also like him: for he does not greatly prosper, having an antipope who is the cause of sufficient unpleasantness; and they are not happy to imitate him.

VII

And so, brethren, flee from them and from communion with them; for they are *false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works* (II Cor. 11: 13-15) And in another place the same Apostle says of them: *For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal* (Rom. 16: 18; II Tim 2: 19). And in another place: *Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision* (Philippians 3: 2). And then, in another place: *But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed* (Gal. 1: 8) See what has been prophetically foretold, that "though an angel from heaven..." -- so that no one could cite in justification of himself an especially high position. And the beloved Disciple speaks thus: *If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting; for he that giveth him greeting is partaker in his evil deeds* (II John 10-11).

Therefore, in so far as this is what has been commanded you by the Holy Apostles, -- stand aright, hold firmly to the traditions which you have received, both written and by word of mouth, that you be not deprived of your firmness if you become led away by the delusions of the lawless. May God, Who is All-powerful, make them also to know their delusion; and having delivered us from them as from evil tares, may He gather us into His granaries like pure and useful wheat, in Jesus Christ our Lord, to Whom belongs all glory, honor, and worship, with His Father Who is without beginning, and His All-holy and Good and Life-giving Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

REFERENCES

a Joann. Damasc., *Patrologia Graeca*, v. 94, col. 832. b *Ibid.* c *Ibid.*, col. 849b. d Nomocanonis tit. XII, c. 2. Pitra, *Juris ecclesiastici Graecorum*, v. 11, p. 600. e Theodori Balsamonis Responsa ad interrogationes Marci, n. 15, *PG*, v. 138, col. 968. f Joann. Damasc. *PG*, v. 36, col. 252. g Dionys., *PG*, v. 3, col. 641. h *PG*, v. 36, col. 252. i *PG*, v. 91, c. 136. j Just. Mart., *PG*, v. 6, c. 1224. k *PG*, v. 94, c. 824.

THE ASCENSION
OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

By S. V. BULGAKOV[1]

THE FEAST OF THE ASCENSION is celebrated on the fortieth day after Easter, which always falls on Thursday of the sixth week. It received its name from the event commemorated and glorified on this day: the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ bodily into heaven (St. Mark 16: 16-20; St. Luke 24: 50-53; Acts 1: 4-12).

On the final day of His visible sojourn on earth the Lord Jesus Christ, having appeared to all the Apostles assembled together and commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to await the promised descent of the Holy Spirit, *led them out as far as to Bethany* (St. Luke 24: 50), to the Mount of Olives, conversing with them on the way concerning the establishing of His Church on earth. At the summit of the Mount the Lord, explaining to the Apostles in what their calling should consist, said to them: *Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth* (Acts 1:8). Having said this, the Saviour raised His Divine hands and blessed His disciples. *And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven* (St Luke 24: 51). The Apostles devoutly prostrated themselves before the Lord as He was blessing them, and with trembling amazement they beheld how He ascended to heaven, until finally a cloud hid Him from their gaze.

1. From the *Manual for Orthodox Priests* (*Nastolnaya Kniga*), Kharkov, 1900.

Troparion, Tone 4

Thou didst ascend in glory, O Christ our God,
Having bestowed joy on Thy disciples
By the promise of the Holy Spirit,
And by having assured them by Thy blessing
That Thou art the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world.

But the Lord did not delay to console His disciples in a separation so unexpected and sorrowful for them. Immediately there appeared to the Apostles two men in white clothing. These were Angels, whom the ascended Saviour, as Lord and Master of the angels, had sent on earth to the Apostles. The angels told them: *Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven* Acts (1:11). Having heard from the angels such consoling news, the Apostles, being filled with deepest joy, left the Mount of Olives and returned to Jerusalem.

With such glory did Jesus Christ ascend visibly to heaven, as His divine disciples inform us: yet even more glorious was His further invisible ascension to His Father, into the eternal Divine Kingdom, as this is expressed in the Church hymns of this day, in accordance with the prophecies of the Old Testament Prophets.

Angels greeted the ascended Lord with the sound of trumpets and accompanied Him (Ps. 46:6). The Holy Spirit commanded the heavenly Powers to open to the Redeemer the gates of the eternal Kingdom of Glory: *Lift up your gates, ye princes, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in* (Ps. 23:7). And our Saviour, having "ascended into heaven, whence He had come," as the Son of God, Consubstantial with God the Father, assumed that Divine Glory which He had had with the Father before the world's existence; He ascended into heaven as the Son of Man, exalting humanity in His Person *far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion* (Eph. 1:21). God the Father Himself awaited with love and received to Himself His beloved Son, the God-man Jesus Christ, Whom He placed at His right hand, as was expressed already in the Old Testament by the holy Psalmist: *The Lord said to my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool* (Ps. 109:1; cf. Rom. 8:34, Heb 8:1). Thus our Saviour not only ascended into heaven, but was also enthroned at the right hand of God the Father, *i.e.*, as God-man and Redeemer of the world received also according to human nature all the authority, grandeur, and glory that belong to Him according to Divinity, as He Himself said to the Apostles after His Resurrection: *All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth* (St Matt. 28:18).

The feast of the Ascension has great significance, since it assures us of the fulfillment of the Divine plan for the salvation of men and the

whole world and for the most exalted glorification of human nature, which in the Person of Jesus Christ was raised higher than the light-bearing spirits and placed upon a throne of Divine Glory; and this assures us all that from henceforth the gate to heaven is open to those dwelling on earth, for thither *the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus* (Heb 6:20), and thither on the path by which He went to heaven all His true followers will ascend.

Moreover, "the present feast," as the Blessed Augustine says, "reveals to us in Jesus Christ the mystery of man and God," testifying of the indivisible yet unconfused union of Divinity and humanity in the Person of Jesus Christ, "Who ascended in two natures."

In the Divine services of this feast, although there are also expressed the sorrowful reflections into which the Apostles at first were plunged, being left orphans, still they are preeminently penetrated by an exalted feeling of joy; for, as St. John Chrysostom teaches us, "Now men resemble angels, humanity has been joined to the incorporeal powers, and from this affinity has sprung a great bond; the Lord of all, ascended to heaven, has reconciled the human race with His Father; we who by all appearances were unworthy of earth, are now raised to heaven with our very nature; and nature, against which the Cherubim defended paradise, is now itself enthroned among the Cherubim." This is why the holy Church, in the hymns of this day, calling believers to sing a song of victory to the ascended Lord Who has placed us at the right hand of the Father, cries out: "The earth exults, heaven too rejoices in the Ascension of the Lord, the holy Church at the same time, in conformity to the words of the angels spoken to the Apostles at the Lord's Ascension (Acts 1:11), reminds us also in her hymns for this day of the Second Coming, strengthening thus our impulse to lift up "eyes and thoughts to the heights," to direct our gaze "together with our feeling to the heavenly gates of death" and beseech the Lord to "have mercy on our souls, granting remission of transgressions."

In conformity with this St. Gregory of Rome, too, instructs us in his sermon on Ascension Day: "Let us hasten, beloved, with all our heart to follow Him thither, whither He has ascended. Let us renounce every passion for earthly objects; having part in the inheritance with Him of heavenly dwellings, let us not seek blessedness on earth. We must take care and thought for the fact that He, although now He ascends into heaven with meekness, will at some time appear with terror

and in threatening form, and will demand from us with strictness all that He now teaches us with meekness. Let none despise the time given for repentance; let none be negligent of himeslf while there is time. At the Last Judgement the Saviour will the more strictly demand an account of us, the more He is longsuffering with us now. Never, O brethren, let this escape your memory. Let strong waves agitate your spirit in the midst of the present sea of life; soon you will reach harbor in the heavenly homeland; soon you will be in the light of unapproachable glory. Now the Lord ascends for us into heaven. Let us the more often and the more attentively reflect on what faith teaches us. If we have not yet become strong in deeds of faith and piety, if our bodily powers are still weak, then at least let us follow our Saviour by our preparedness and love of Him."

The establishment of the feast of the Ascension without doubt goes back to the profoundest antiquity. Apart from the importance of the event commemorated in this feast, the antiquity of the feast is also attested by positive proofs. Thus, Apostolic decrees already prescribe its celebration on the fortieth day after Easter. St. John Chrysostom calls this feast great and most important, and refers it to the class of the other feasts certainly established by the Apostles: Easter and Pentecost. Blessed Augustine also calls it a feast most ancient and universal.

HEALING

OF AN INJURED SHOULDER

VASSILY SKVORTSOV FELL INTO an open hatch on a fishing boat in Kodiak and severely injured his shoulder on the cement bottom. He suffered from the pain for several days after returning to his home in the village of Ouzkoye. At that time there was no doctor in Kodiak and people were treated with home remedies. The more religious people, however, turned in prayer to God, to the Mother of God, and to the saints. And so it was that Vassily Skvortsov got in a boat and set out for the grave of Starets Herman.

In those days one couldn't get under the church (to the grave of the Starets), and everything was closed; only on the eastern side of the chapel some holes had been cut, and there people could reach inside and take some earth. That is what Vassily did too: he thrust his hand into the opening, grabbed some earth and, baring his shoulder and hand and saying, "Well, good old man, I've come to you, help me," -- he rubbed the injured place with earth from the grave of Father Herman. And -- the pain immediately disappeared and he returned home well. (Being an expert carpenter, he erected then and there, in remembrance of this event, a candlestick for the church in gratitude to Father Herman, and bore witness by this to the miracle of his healing.)

Archimandrite Gerasim Schmaltz

NEW BOOKS

THE ART OF PRAYER, An Orthodox Anthology. Compiled by Igumen Chariton of Valamo, translated by E. Kadloubovsky and E. M. Palmer, edited with an introduction by Timothy Ware. London: Faber & Faber Ltd., 1966. 287 pp.

It is one thing to read and marvel about Orthodox spirituality with its infinite beauty of tradition and art and its deep theological foundation; but it is quite another matter to realize the hard labor that is required to adjust oneself to its actual practice. Despite the fact that more and more of the essential Orthodox literature is now being made available in English, it is precisely on this question of spiritual practice that a great number of enthusiasts for Orthodoxy deviate and fall into illusion. Too many, unfortunately, prematurely assume that they understand the Orthodox spiritual world and thus prevent themselves from ever crossing the threshhold of the saving Truth. A guide to spiritual sobriety is essential.

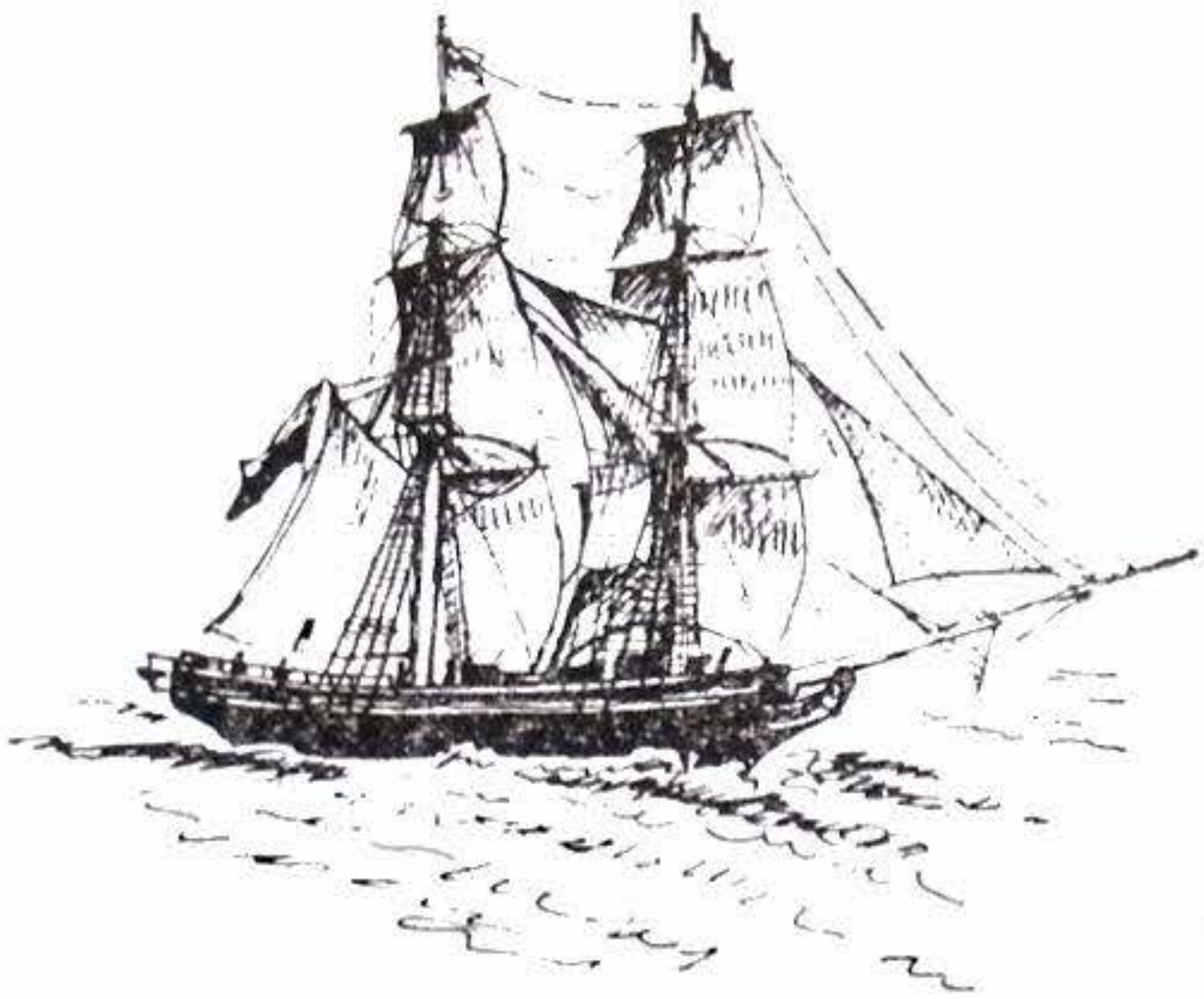
E. Kadloubovsky and E. M. Palmer, translators of two volumes of excerpts from the *Philokalia*, have now produced another extremely valuable translation for serious seekers of salvation on the true Orthodox path. The book, first published in Russian in 1936, is a well-known anthology of brief citations, mainly from Bishop Theophan the Recluse, compiled for a specific purpose: to present clearly and systematically the Orthodox teaching on prayer, its various stages, aspects, and prerequisites. The compiler was a certain Abbot Chariton of Valaam Monastery, but the book actually represents the collective spirit of the Valaam Startsi, who preserved the best spiritual tradition of Orthodoxy up to quite recent times.

The history of the Startsi of Valaam begins with the transference of Fr. Nazary to Valaam from Sarov Monastery, whose startsi had nurtured St. Seraphim, his contemporary. At Valaam his spiritual labors were continued by a group of disciples of the great Starets Paissy Velichkovsky. One of them, Fr. Leonid (Lev in skhema), left for Optina to put a beginning to the glorious institution of Optina Startsi. It is interesting to note that Blessed Fr. Herman of Alaska was a faithful student of Fr. Nazary at Valaam and himself practiced the function of starets on the American continent.

The book is to be highly recommended. It may serve, for one thing, as an excellent introduction to Bp. Theophan. But, more importantly, it can produce great influence on the sincere God-seeker of today, at the same time testing the worth of his spiritual conceptions and practice. The increased publication in recent years of books of such quality undoubtedly should be regarded as a special grace of God for the English-speaking world. From this a movement of spiritual awakening can be inspired in the hearts of contemporary men. If, however, the response is feeble -- then perhaps the end is closer than we think.

G. P.

To purchase this book, see back cover.



A PILGRIMAGE TO THE ORTHODOX HOLY PLACES OF AMERICA

THE SIXTH PILGRIMAGE

AMERICA, ALTHOUGH called Christian, has yet to be extensively enlightened by Orthodoxy. Its spiritual soil has as yet been little plowed by truly righteous men, and the seed of Christ in Holy Orthodoxy (the churches with their services, writings of the Holy Fathers, Orthodox traditions, and the like) has not yet brought forth its fruits. Our cities very little resemble Christian settlements, and as time proceeds, sin increases and accumulates into an atmosphere charged with sin, as it were, a common sum of iniquity that spreads like a disease...

The Church, however, teaches that where sin multiplies, there also flows forth ever more abundantly the Grace of God to aid men to salvation. Some of our cities have witnessed the ascetic labors of certain Orthodox bishops and priests, and laymen too, as they laid their spiritual foundation upon the source of the outpouring of God's Grace. Other cities have been granted to guard and treasure holy relics of Saints or Miraculous Icons of the Mother of God.

In Chicago, Illinois, for example, there is treasured one of the greatest Icons of the Mother of God. The Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God is located in the Old Russian Cathedral at 1121 North Leavitt Street (now in the American Metropolia). Before it, in awesome trembling and with tears of repentance, our Orthodox forefathers used to gather from great distances to pray and worship. Today the miracles are not as abundant as in former times, for today men have less faith, and less love is in their hearts...

THE MIRACULOUS ICONS
OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

THE TIKHVIN MOTHER OF GOD

ONE OF THE SEVENTY ICONS of the Mother of God which were painted, according to tradition, by the Apostle and Evangelist Luke, the Tikhvin Icon takes its name from the river and small village in the area of Novgorod in northern Russia near which it was housed and where it became an object of great veneration by Orthodox believers for over five centuries. It is possible, however, to trace the history of the Icon much farther back, into Byzantine times.

The Icon was brought in the 5th century by the Empress Eudoxia from Jerusalem to Constantinople, where a church was built to house it. During the period of iconoclasm it was hidden in the Pantocratoros Monastery and with the victory of Orthodoxy was brought again to the temple built for it.

In 1383 there was a miraculous apparition of an Icon of the Mother of God near Novgorod; its identity with the wonderworking Icon of Constantinople is attested by the following account:

Soon after the appearance of the Icon in Russia some merchants from Novgorod were visiting Constantinople and went to see the Patriarch. In conversing with them the Patriarch asked them if there was talk in Russia of the appearance anywhere of a wonderworking Icon of the Mother of God; for one had recently disappeared from Constantinople. The merchants told him of the Icon which had appeared near Tikhvin; and the Patriarch, after comparing the time of the Icon's disappearance from Constantinople with its appearance in Russia, came to

"The Meeting of the Holy Icon" in the Rural Countryside of Central Russia.
Famous 19th century painting by K. Savitsky.

The Original Tikhvin Icon, Showing the Entire *Riza* (ornamental covering, 26x36 in.)

The *Weeping* Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God on Mount Athos. See *The Orthodox Word*, no. 6, 1965.

the conclusion that it was one and the same Icon. The Patriarch told them how the Icon had already several times miraculously disappeared from Constantinople, but it had always reappeared later. "And now," concluded the Patriarch, "for our pride and wrongdoings She has left us for good." He showed the merchants the shrine in the temple, near the first column on the right side, where the Icon had been located; and on the basis of this information the Icon was placed in exactly the same place in the Tikhvin Monastery in Russia.

In the year 1383, on June 26, on Lake Ladoga in northern Russia, several fishermen saw a bright light flowing from the heavens, and in this light there was carried through the air an Icon of the Mother of God holding the Child in Her left arm. The miracle was repeated many times in other places near Novgorod. Whenever the Icon was met by the prayers of faithful worshippers, it would descend and be received by them, and miracles would be performed by the mercy of the Most Holy Mother of God.

Finally the Icon came to rest by the shore of the river Tikhvin, near the town of the same name. First a chapel, and then a church, were built on this spot. Seven years after it was completed, however, the church was set on fire by a neglected candle. It was burned to the ground, but by a miracle of God the Icon remained unharmed. being held up in the air by angels. A new church was built in the same place to house the miraculous Icon, but within a few years it too was turned to ashes; and again the Icon was left unharmed. The third church raised on this site, being much larger and stronger, stood for more than a hundred years. In 1560 a monastery was erected and dedicated to the Icon.

All the while that the miraculous Icon remained among believers countless miracles took place. The blind were given to see again; the deaf would be allowed to hear; and the mute were blessed with speech. Anyone who would come before the Mother of God with faith in Her miraculous Icon and in God would receive mercy and be made whole.

There are many accounts of miracles granted by God through the holy Icon of Tikhvin. One account relates how, in the year 1596 on the ninth of December, twenty-three hunters arrived at Tikhvin to worship before the sacred Icon. Once they had completed their prayers they related the following miracle.

When these men had been hunting by the North Sea there arose a great storm. Due to the foul weather the hunters were detained and

were unable to return home. The storm lasted a long time, and soon their provisions had diminished. The men began fervently praying that God might help them. Then, upon remembering the holy Tikhvin Icon, they began to pray to the Mother of God. That night one of the hunters experienced a great miracle. The Mother of God appeared to him and instructed him and his friends to eat of a certain grass until the storm ceased. Arising, this hunter related his vision, and all the men began eating of the grass. They found it to taste of bread and discovered it to be very nourishing. The storm lasted for another twenty days, the hunters being nourished all the while by the grass shown them by the Holy Virgin. When the storm finally did cease they praised God and departed for their homes.

In another case a man named Kodrat suffered from a serious illness that soon caused the complete loss of his sight. He remained blind for a period of eighteen months. Then Kodrat heard of the miracle-working Icon at Tikhvin. Immediately he prayed to God and the Holy Virgin and promised to go and pray before the Icon at Tikhvin. When Kodrat had promised to make a pilgrimage to the Icon he immediately regained his sight. However, his pilgrimage was postponed and finally forgotten altogether. In ten years Kodrat again became blind. At that time he had a dream in which there appeared a man who told Kodrat to keep his promise and go to Tikhvin or else he must remain blind. Kodrat remembered his promise and made ready for the pilgrimage. Upon arriving at Tikhvin he was led before the Icon and he prayed to the Mother of God. Immediately he was granted vision by the mercy of God and the prayers of the Mother of God.

Such miracles were not uncommon in connection with the Tikhvin Mother of God. Many persons who were seriously ill, dying, or blind, had visions wherein they were instructed to go to Tikhvin and venerate the sacred Icon. Upon doing so, by faith and God's power they were made whole.

In the years that followed many misfortunes befell the Tikhvin Monastery. It was many times under siege by enemies of the Church. However, each time the holy Icon saved the monastery, most notably in 1613 from the attack of the Swedes.

Besides the original Icon, there were four copies in the Tikhvin Monastery, and hundreds of copies of the Tikhvin Mother of God were venerated in other parts of Russia; many of these were themselves miracle-working.

All four copies in the monastery were miracle working. Today some consider that the Icon now in Chicago may be, not the original, but one of these copies.

At the time of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia the holy Orthodox Church along with its followers was subjected to its cruelest persecution. Many churches, together with the icons and other blessed objects which they housed, were destroyed. Believers fled the persecution and sought shelter where they might pray in peace. The holy Tikhvin Icon was carried along with these Christians and was saved from destruction by the Communists. The Icon spent in such a manner about twenty years. Finally, with the Second World War, it was thought no longer safe to allow the Icon to remain in the land where God had sent it. The holy Icon was carried from the tormented Motherland to Riga, Latvia, where it was placed in the Cathedral. On March 4, 1944, the Holy Tikhvin Mother of God was placed in the hands of John, Bishop of Riga, who greeted Her with the words: "And whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?" (St. Luke 1.43) and ever since accompanies the Icon in Her travels. As the war progressed the Icon was carried to western Germany. Here, too, the Communists attempted to take the Icon for themselves (the Icon at the time of the revolution was magnificently jewelled and valued at 70 thousand rubles). However, all attempts failed, and again the Icon remained miraculously unharmed.

Finally, on June 22, 1949, the Holy Tikhvin Icon was brought to America. Here, Archbishop John for several years stayed in New York City with the Icon, but later was appointed to the Chicago Diocese of the Russian Metropolia, and placed the much venerated Icon in the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Chicago, where it remains to this day.

Holy tradition has it that when Apostle Luke presented the Icon to the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, She was pleased with the image. And truly this much venerated holy Icon shows the blessing of God and the Holy Virgin by bestowing countless mercies and miracles, which continue to this day. As recently as the fall of 1966 there occurred an instant healing of a severely sick boy in the State of Washington.

June 26th is the day the Icon is celebrated.

It is by such holy relics and miracles of our Blessed Church that we Orthodox are witnesses to God's everlasting mercy. Praise be to God!

Vadim Wright

Next issue: A Pilgrimage to Fort Ross in California.

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